

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Special Access Data Collection

WC Docket No. 05-25; RM-50193

**(Updated as of: 11/21/14)**

This document was prepared by the staff at the Wireline Competition Bureau and provides answers to non-technical frequently asked questions (FAQs) regarding the Special Access Data Collection and will be updated periodically. These FAQs are not a substitute for carefully reviewing the data collection [Questions](#) and [Instructions](#). Please direct all technical questions concerning the [Special Access Web Portal](#) to FCC Support at 1-877-480-3201 or 1-717-338-2824 (TTY) or you may submit requests via [e-support](#).

As used below, all capitalized and italicized terms (e.g., *Purchaser*, *Provider*, etc.) are defined terms used for purposes of the data collection. For definitions of these terms, please refer to the [Special Access Data Collection – Glossary of Terms](#).



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## **General**

### **1. What is special access?**

Special access services, or *Dedicated Services*, transport voice and data over a dedicated transmission line between two or more designated points at a rate of at least 1.5 megabytes per second (Mbps) upstream and downstream. Special access service encompasses *Circuit-Based Dedicated Services (CBDS)* such as *DS1s* and *DS3s* and *Packet-Based Dedicated Services (PBDS)* such as Ethernet. For example, wireless providers use high capacity special access lines to send voice and data from cell towers to their mobile switching center where the call is then switched to the sender's intended recipient. Individual consumers, small businesses, government offices, hospitals, medical offices, schools, libraries, ATMs and credit card readers use special access to either connect to a

dedicated network or to an Internet service provider for the completion of the transmission via the Internet.

**2. What is the purpose of the special access data collection?**

The FCC is collecting data for an analysis of the broader special access market. The analysis will help the FCC revise its regulations of the special access services provided by larger traditional phone companies—the “price cap” *Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers (ILECs)* such as AT&T, Verizon, Qwest, etc.—to target regulatory relief where there is sufficient competition to ensure just and reasonable rates, terms, and conditions. For more information, see the FCC’s [Special Access Data Collection Overview](#) webpage.

**3. What is the Commission going to do with the data collected?**

The Commission is collecting the data for a comprehensive market analysis that will look at the number special access providers, facilities, service offerings, revenues, and expenditures nationwide in all price cap areas. The Commission’s review is not limited to the legacy TDM-based services such as DS1s and DS3s provided by larger traditional phone companies (ILECs) but also includes the packet-based service offerings of both phone companies and their competitors such as Ethernet. For more information about the proposed analysis, see the Commission’s December 2012 [Data Collection Order](#).

**4. What is the filing deadline for the collection?**

December 15, 2014.

**5. Where do I submit my data and information in response to the collection?**

The FCC launched a secure web filing interface, i.e. the special access data collection web portal, through which respondents will file data and information in response to the data collection and certifications for those Form 477 filers needing to just certify that they are not covered by the scope of the collection. The special access data collection web portal is available by clicking [here](#).

**6. What are the penalties for not filing in response to this data collection?**

Failure to comply with these data reporting requirements may subject parties to monetary forfeitures of up to \$160,000 for each violation or each day of a continuing violation, up to a maximum of \$1,575,000 for any single act or failure to act that is a continuing violation.

**7. Is there a filing fee?**

No.

**8. Is there a glossary of terms used in the collection?**

Definitions are available in the Definitions section of the Data Collection [Questions](#) or the Commission maintains a [Glossary](#) page for the data collection.

**9. Is the FCC planning any webinars or seminars on the collection?**

Please check the [Special Access Data Collection Overview](#) page for announcements regarding webinars, brown bags and other programs as well as recordings of those webinars and the webinar slide decks.

- The FCC hosted a webinar providing a high-level overview of the collection and opportunity to ask general questions, which was held on **October 30, 2014**. A



live recording of the webinar is available on the [Special Access Data Collection Overview](#) page as well as the presentation slides and transcript.

**10. Does the collection capture intrastate and interstate billing information?**

Yes. The Commission has stated its intent to collect data on interstate and intrastate special access services and special access services offered via a state-level tariff or state-approved contract. [Data Collection Order, 27 FCC Rcd 16318, 16327, para. 19 \(2012\)](#). For purposes of the collection, *Revenues* are defined as intrastate and interstate billed amounts and *Tariff* means intrastate or interstate rates filed by common carriers. See [Data Collection Definitions](#).

## **Who must respond to the collection?**

**1. Who must respond to the collection?**

*Providers and Purchasers of Dedicated Services* and certain entities providing *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service* in study areas where the *Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier (ILEC)* is subject to price cap regulation must respond to the collection unless specifically excluded. The collection captures data from *ILECs*, competitive local exchange carriers (*CLECs*), interexchange carriers (*IXCs*), cable system operators, wireless providers, or any other entity subject to the FCC's jurisdiction that is not otherwise exempted that either provides a dedicated service or a connection over which a *Dedicated Service* could be provided as well as *End User*, i.e. business, institutional or government entities, that purchase *Dedicated Services* including wireless service providers.

**2. How can I determine if I operate in a study area where the ILEC is subject to price cap regulation?**

The FCC developed a [mapping tool](#) to assist entities in determining whether they provide or purchase services covered by the scope of the collection in price cap areas. Additionally, the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) maintains a [chart](#) on its website which lists price cap and rate of return ILECs, their study area codes, and study area names. You are only required to report information and data pertaining to those study areas where the *ILEC* is subject to price cap regulation, not rate-of-return areas. That said, entities can report information across their territories, including the rate-of-return areas, if they find it easier to do so.

**3. Am I required to respond if I only operate in areas where the Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier (ILEC) is subject to rate of return regulation?**

No. You are only required to respond to the data collection in study areas where the ILEC is subject to price cap regulation, not rate-of-return regulation. The FCC developed a [mapping tool](#) to assist entities in determining whether they provide or purchase services covered by the scope of the collection in price cap areas. Additionally, the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) maintains a [chart](#) on its website which lists price cap and rate of return ILECs, their study area codes, and study area names.

**4. Am I required to respond if the ILEC that operated in my service area converted from rate-of-return to price cap regulation in 2013?**

Yes. The collection covers *Dedicated Service* provided or purchased and *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service* provided if the *ILEC* was subject to price cap regulation in the area at any point during the relevant reporting period, 2013.



**5. Am I required to respond to the collection if the ILEC operating in my study area was not subject to price cap regulation until 2014?**

No. The scope of the data collection covers price cap areas. Most of the questions in the data collection ask for data, e.g., *Locations* with *Connections* and billing information, for calendar 2013, giving the FCC a snapshot in time. Since 2013, the FCC has granted one petition to convert three ILECs to price cap regulation. See [CenturyLink Petition for Conversion of Average Schedule Affiliates to Price Cap Regulation and for Limited Waiver Relief](#), WC Docket No. 14-23, Order, 29 FCC Rcd 5140 (WCB 2014). The three ILECs are affiliates of CenturyLink – i.e., CenturyTel of Chester, Inc., CenturyTel of Pottsville, Inc., and CenturyTel of the Midwest-Wisconsin (Wayside), and collectively have less than 6,000 access lines. With respect to these converted price cap areas, *Providers* and *Purchasers* are not required to respond to the collection.

**6. Who is required to respond to the collection when a change of control occurs during the 2013 reporting period?**

If at any point during the 2013 reporting period, the entity in question provided services covered by the scope of this collection or purchased *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service*, then the current owner of that entity is required to respond.

**7. Who is required to respond to the collection when a change of control occurs after the 2013 reporting period?**

In a situation where a system used to provide service in 2013 is later sold in an assignment of assets in 2014, then the successor-in-interest at the time of the December 15, 2014 filing deadline is required to comply. Of course, the parties could contract to have the seller prepare the filing but the reporting entity is the successor-in-interest. In a transfer of control scenario, the entity that owns the system still exists and would still have to comply even if control of that entity was transferred in 2014.

**8. Do facility based Competitive Access Providers (CAPs) who provide wholesale services to other carriers, retail *Dedicated Services to End Users* and do not file FCC Form 477 need to respond to the collection?**

Yes.

**9. Am I required to report the U.S. portion of an international circuit?**

Yes, filers are only asked to report the U.S. portion of a circuit, not the non-U.S. portion of the circuit.

## **Exemptions from Responding**

**1. Is there a *de minimis* or small business exemption from responding?**

Purchasers that purchased less than \$5 million in *Dedicated Services* in 2013 in areas where the ILEC is subject to price cap regulation in 2013 are excluded from the questions directed at *Purchasers*. However, you may be required to provide data in response to questions if you are a *Provider* or entity providing *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service* to 15,000 or more customers or 1,500 or more business broadband customers in price cap areas. Even if you do not fall in any of these categories, you may have an obligation to simply file a certification with the FCC saying as much if you were required to file the FCC Form 477 to report broadband connections to end user locations

for 2013. For additional information, see the Bureau's September 2013 [Data Collection Implementation Order](#) and the data collection [Instructions – Pages 1-4](#). Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

**2. Are small Providers of Dedicated Services exempted from responding to the collection?**

No.

**3. I am a small business Purchaser. Am I required to respond?**

*Purchasers* that purchased less than \$5 million in *Dedicated Services* in 2013 in areas where the *ILEC* is subject to price cap regulation are specifically excluded from the collection. However, if you were required to file FCC Form 477 to report the provision of broadband connections to end user locations for year 2013 then you must file a certification using the Streamlined Certification Process using the FCC's secure website portal, [Special Access Web Portal](#). For more information, see [Data Collection Questions – Pages 4, 28](#) and the [System Guide](#). Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

**4. Am I exempted from the collection if I self-provision special access service to my own facilities on a private fiber network?**

No. Even if you self-provision special access services to your own facilities on a private network, you may still be required to file a response to the collection.

**5. How is the \$5 million threshold calculated for determining whether a filer is a Purchaser for purposes of the collection (e.g., when dealing with a holding company consisting of various subsidiaries)?**

Parties can either submit a single response reporting aggregate information at the ultimate parent/holding company level for all subsidiaries and intermediate holding companies or submit separate responses for individual subsidiaries, and intermediate holding companies. When dealing with a holding company consisting of subsidiaries, the \$5 million threshold is calculated at the holding company level even if the parent decides to file separate responses for each subsidiary or operating unit. For example, ultimate Parent Company A directly owns Subsidiary A and Subsidiary B, each subsidiary purchased \$2.6 million in *Dedicated Services* in price cap areas for 2013. The company as a whole is considered a *Purchaser* for purposes of the collection because its expenditures in the aggregate exceed \$5 million. The company can either submit one response at the parent company level or file two separate responses, one for Subsidiary A and one for Subsidiary B. For additional information, see the data collection [Instructions – Pages 7-8](#). Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

**6. I am a small Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service provider. Am I required to respond?**

Entities providing *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service* to fewer than 15,000 customers and fewer than 1,500 business broadband customers as of December 18, 2012 are not required to respond to the questions directed at such entities. However, you may be required to provide data in response to questions if you are a *Provider* or

*Purchaser of Dedicated Services.* For more information, see [Data Collection Questions – Page 1](#). Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

**7. I am a business, school, or local government entity that provides an information service. Am I required to respond?**

*End Users* (businesses, schools, local government entities) that provide an information service (such as Internet access service) are excluded from the questions directed at *Purchasers*. However, you may be required to provide data in response to questions if you are a *Provider* or entity providing *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service* to 15,000 or more customers or 1,500 or more business broadband customers in price cap areas. Even if you do not fall in any of these categories, you may have an obligation to simply file a certification with the FCC saying as much if you were required to file the FCC Form 477 to report broadband connections to end user locations for 2013. For additional information, see the Bureau's September 2013 [Data Collection Implementation Order](#) and the data collection [Instructions – Pages 3-4](#). Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

**8. I am an equipment authorization holder regulated under Parts 2 and 15 of the Commission's rules. Am I required to respond?**

Parts 2 and 15 equipment authorization holders are excluded from the questions directed at *Purchasers*. However, you may be required to provide data in response to questions if you are a *Provider* or entity providing *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service* to 15,000 or more customers or 1,500 or more business broadband customers in price cap areas. Even if you do not fall in any of these categories, you may have an obligation to simply file a certification with the FCC saying as much if you were required to file the FCC Form 477 to report broadband connections to end user locations for 2013. For additional information, see the Bureau's September 2013 [Data Collection Implementation Order](#) and the data collection [Instructions – Pages 3-4](#). Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

**9. I am an accounting authorization holder in the maritime and maritime mobile-satellite radio services regulated under Part 3 of the Commission's rules. Am I required to respond?**

Part 3 accounting authorization holders in the maritime and maritime mobile-satellite radios services are excluded from the questions directed at *Purchasers*. However, you may be required to provide data in response to questions if you are a *Provider* or entity providing *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service* to 15,000 or more customers or 1,500 or more business broadband customers in price cap areas. Even if you do not fall in any of these categories, you may have an obligation to simply file a certification with the FCC saying as much if you were required to file the FCC Form 477 to report broadband connections to end user locations for 2013. For additional information, see the Bureau's September 2013 [Data Collection Implementation Order](#) and the data collection [Instructions – Pages 3-4](#). Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

**10. I am an experimental radio authorization holder regulated under Part 5 of the Commission's rules. Am I required to respond?**

Part 5 experimental radio authorization holders are excluded from the questions directed at *Purchasers*. However, you may be required to provide data in response to questions if you are a *Provider* or entity providing *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service* to 15,000 or more customers or 1,500 or more business broadband customers in price cap areas. Even if you do not fall in any of these categories, you may have an obligation to simply file a certification with the FCC saying as much if you were required to file the FCC Form 477 to report broadband connections to end user locations for 2013. For additional information, see the Bureau's September 2013 [Data Collection Implementation Order](#) and the data collection [Instructions – Pages 3-4](#). Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

**11. I am a commercial radio operator regulated under Part 13 of the Commission's rules. Am I required to respond?**

Part 13 commercial radio operators are excluded from the questions directed at *Purchasers*. However, you may be required to provide data in response to questions if you are a *Provider* or entity providing *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service* to 15,000 or more customers or 1,500 or more business broadband customers in price cap areas. Even if you do not fall in any of these categories, you may have an obligation to simply file a certification with the FCC saying as much if you were required to file the FCC Form 477 to report broadband connections to end user locations for 2013. For additional information, see the Bureau's September 2013 [Data Collection Implementation Order](#) and the data collection [Instructions – Pages 3-4](#). Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

**12. I am an antenna structure registration holder regulated under Part 17 of the Commission's rules. Am I required to respond?**

Part 17 antenna structure registration holders are excluded from the questions directed at *Purchasers*. However, you may be required to provide data in response to questions if you are a *Provider* or entity providing *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service* to 15,000 or more customers or 1,500 or more business broadband customers in price cap areas. Even if you do not fall in any of these categories, you may have an obligation to simply file a certification with the FCC saying as much if you were required to file the FCC Form 477 to report broadband connections to end user locations for 2013. For additional information, see the Bureau's September 2013 [Data Collection Implementation Order](#) and the data collection [Instructions – Pages 3-4](#). Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

**13. I am a television and/or radio broadcaster regulated under Part 73 of the Commission's rules. Am I required to respond?**

Part 73 television and/or radio broadcasters are excluded from the questions directed at *Purchasers*. However, you may be required to provide data in response to questions if you are a *Provider* or entity providing *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service* to 15,000 or more customers or 1,500 or more business broadband customers in price

cap areas. Even if you do not fall in any of these categories, you may have an obligation to simply file a certification with the FCC saying as much if you were required to file the FCC Form 477 to report broadband connections to end user locations for 2013. For additional information, see the Bureau's September 2013 [Data Collection Implementation Order](#) and the data collection [Instructions – Pages 3-4](#). Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

**14. I hold an authorization issued pursuant to Part 74 of the Commission's rules such as experimental radio, auxiliary, special broadcast and other program distribution service authorizations. Am I required to respond?**

Part 74 authorization holders, such as experimental radio, auxiliary, special broadcast and other program distribution service authorization holders, are excluded from the questions directed at *Purchasers*. However, you may be required to provide data in response to questions if you are a *Provider* or entity providing *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service* to 15,000 or more customers or 1,500 or more business broadband customers in price cap areas. Even if you do not fall in any of these categories, you may have an obligation to simply file a certification with the FCC saying as much if you were required to file the FCC Form 477 to report broadband connections to end user locations for 2013. For additional information, see the Bureau's September 2013 [Data Collection Implementation Order](#) and the data collection [Instructions – Pages 3-4](#). Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

**15. I hold a maritime service authorization regulated under Part 80 of the Commission's rules. Am I required to respond?**

Part 80 maritime service authorization holders are excluded from the questions directed at *Purchasers*. However, you may be required to provide data in response to questions if you are a *Provider* or entity providing *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service* to 15,000 or more customers or 1,500 or more business broadband customers in price cap areas. Even if you do not fall in any of these categories, you may have an obligation to simply file a certification with the FCC saying as much if you were required to file the FCC Form 477 to report broadband connections to end user locations for 2013. For additional information, see the Bureau's September 2013 [Data Collection Implementation Order](#) and the data collection [Instructions – Pages 3-4](#). Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

**16. I am an aviation service authorization holder regulated under Part 87 of the Commission's rules. Am I required to respond?**

Part 87 aviation service authorization holders are excluded from the questions directed at *Purchasers*. However, you may be required to provide data in response to questions if you are a *Provider* or entity providing *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service* to 15,000 or more customers or 1,500 or more business broadband customers in price cap areas. Even if you do not fall in any of these categories, you may have an obligation to simply file a certification with the FCC saying as much if you were required to file the FCC Form 477 to report broadband connections to end user locations for 2013. For additional information, see the Bureau's September 2013 [Data Collection Implementation Order](#) and the data collection [Instructions – Pages 3-4](#). Additionally, the FCC has prepared a



decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

**17. I am a private land mobile radio service authorization holder regulated under Part 90 of the Commission's rules. Am I required to respond?**

Part 90 private land mobile radio service authorization holders are excluded from the questions directed at *Purchasers* except for authorization holders providing point-to-point fixed microwave services and authorization holders in the Wireless Broadband Services frequency band (3650-3700 MHz). Further, you may be required to provide data in response to questions if you are a *Provider* or entity providing *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service* to 15,000 or more customers or 1,500 or more business broadband customers in price cap areas. Even if you do not fall in any of these categories, you may have an obligation to simply file a certification with the FCC saying as much if you were required to file the FCC Form 477 to report broadband connections to end user locations for 2013. For additional information, see the Bureau's September 2013 [Data Collection Implementation Order](#) and the data collection [Instructions – Pages 3-4](#). Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

**18. I am a personal radio service authorization holder regulated under Part 95 of the Commission's rules. Am I required to respond?**

Part 95 personal radio service authorization holders are excluded from the questions directed at *Purchasers*. However, you may be required to provide data in response to questions if you are a *Provider* or entity providing *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service* to 15,000 or more customers or 1,500 or more business broadband customers in price cap areas. Even if you do not fall in any of these categories, you may have an obligation to simply file a certification with the FCC saying as much if you were required to file the FCC Form 477 to report broadband connections to end user locations for 2013. For additional information, see the Bureau's September 2013 [Data Collection Implementation Order](#) and the data collection [Instructions – Pages 3-4](#). Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

**19. I am an amateur radio service authorization holder regulated under Part 97 of the Commission's rules. Am I required to respond?**

Part 97 amateur radio service authorization holders are excluded from the questions directed at *Purchasers*. However, you may be required to provide data in response to questions if you are a *Provider* or entity providing *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service* to 15,000 or more customers or 1,500 or more business broadband customers in price cap areas. Even if you do not fall in any of these categories, you may have an obligation to simply file a certification with the FCC saying as much if you were required to file the FCC Form 477 to report broadband connections to end user locations for 2013. For additional information, see the Bureau's September 2013 [Data Collection Implementation Order](#) and the data collection [Instructions – Pages 3-4](#). Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).



**20. Am I required to if I filed FCC Form 477 for 2013 but I am not a Provider, Purchaser, or Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Services provider in a price cap area?**

If you were required to report broadband connections to end user locations on the FCC Form 477 ("Local Telephone Competition and Broadband Reporting") for 2013 you are required to respond to the collection only to certify that you are not a *Provider, Purchaser, or Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Services* provider in a price cap area. Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

## **Confidential Treatment of Submissions**

**1. Will other filers be able to view the information I submit?**

Information and data submitted in response to the data collection are subject to protections afforded in the Data Collection Protective Order. Only those authorized persons who are Outside Counsel or Outside Consultants and not involved in Competitive Decision-Making and have executed an Acknowledgement of Confidentiality, as those terms are defined in the Protective Order, will be able to access Confidential and Highly Confidential Information and Data submitted in response to the collection. For more information, see the [Data Collection Protective Order](#).

**2. Will other parties be able to view my submissions through the special access web portal?**

No. Only the filer will be able to view their essay uploads and database container uploads submitted in response to the collection through the web portal.

**3. How will the FCC protect customer names and Customer Proprietary Network Information (CPNI)?**

The FCC will mask the names of customers, i.e. Customer Proprietary Network Information (CPNI), reported by *Providers* in their reported billing data with some other unique identifier which will protect the customer's privacy interest while not adversely affecting analysis results. For more information, see the [Data Collection Protective Order](#).

## **Definitions**

**1. Does the definition of *Connection* include a dedicated communications path between two *End Users*?**

Yes.

**2. Does the definition of *Connection* include unlit dark fiber?**

A *Connection* merely has to have the capability of being used to provide a *Dedicated Service* for purposes of the data collection, which captures *Connections* using unlit dark fiber.

**3. Does a *Dedicated Service* include mixed *DS1s* that include elements with a capacity below a *DS1*?**

Filers are only asked to report the *Dedicated Services* component so you would not need to report information on elements with capacity below a *DS1*, i.e. that does not meet the capacity for *Dedicated Services* as defined in the collection. To the extent you can separately

identify as part of a bundled service the *Revenues* or expenditures associated with the sale or purchase of a *Dedicated Service*, report those *Revenues* or expenditures.

**4. Are entities that provide dark fiber considered *Providers* for purposes of the filing requirement?**

Yes. Entities that provide unlit dark fiber are captured by the collection as *Providers*. The definition of *Competitive Provider* includes entities that either provide a *Dedicated Service* or a *Connection* over which a *Dedicated Service* could be provided. A *Connection* merely has to have the capability of being used to provide a *Dedicated Service* for purposes of the data collection, which captures *Connections* using unlit dark fiber. However, entities that provide dark fiber should not report *Connections* which they have leased pursuant to an IRU (unless there are separate fiber strands to the *Location* that the entity owns and has not leased as an *IRU*).

**5. Are Synchronous Optical NETwork (SONET), Automatic Teler Machine (ATM) and frame relay services considered a *Circuit Based Dedicated Service (CBDS)* or a *Packet Based Dedicated Service (PBDS)* for purposes of the collection?**

For purposes of the data collection, SONET, ATM and frame relay services are treated as *PBDS*.

**6. Does *Location* include an *End User's* premises?**

Yes.

**7. Does *Location* include central offices?**

No.

**8. Are bundled services, including voice, Internet access and data, treated as *Dedicated Services*?**

Yes. The *Dedicated Services* components of a bundled service offering are captured by the collection as *Dedicated Services*. To the extent you can separately identify as part of a bundled service the *Revenues* or expenditures associated with the sale or purchase of a *Dedicated Service*, report those *Revenues* or expenditures.

### **Competitive Provider Questions (Section II.A)**

**1. Are companies that access dark fiber pursuant to a non-*IRU* agreement but provide *Dedicated Services* to *End Users* and do not own or use *UNEs* have to respond to Section II.A?**

The respondent is only required to respond to Questions II.A.1-2.

**2. How do I know where the Commission has granted *Phase I* or *Phase II Pricing Flexibility*? (Question II.A.2(a))**

A complete list of where the Commission has granted either *Phase I* and/or *Phase II Pricing Flexibility* for *Channel Terminations* can be found in Appendix D to the Commission's [Pricing Flexibility Suspension Order](#).

**3. Which questions do I need to respond to if I own unlit dark fiber that terminates to a *Location*? (Questions II.A.3-4)**

Unlit dark fiber would be reported as a *Location* with *Connection* in response to Questions II.A.3-4. However, you would not need to report billing information related to that facility because it is not being used to provide a *Dedicated Service*. You must report the *Location* but in the various bandwidth fields you may enter a null value of "0."

**4. How do we report *Locations* that do not have U.S. Postal Service addresses or where we do not know the geocode (i.e., latitude and longitude) to the requisite degree of accuracy? (Questions II.A.4(b)-(c), II.A.7)**

If you have entered the geocode for the *Location* (i.e., latitude and longitude), then you do not need to provide the situs address for the *Location*. If you do not know the actual address for the *Location* or the geocode with the requisite degree of accuracy, then you may either enter the closest nearby address to the *Location* and/or estimate the geocode for the *Location*.

**5. Should fiber route mapping data be current as of December 31, 2013 or as of the filing date? (Question II.A.5)**

For purposes of answering Question II.A.5, mapping data submitted should be accurate as of the filing date.

**6. Can I use google maps or some other file format other than ESRI Shapefiles to file my response to the fiber mapping questions? (Question II.A.5)**

There are free mapping software programs available, such as [QGIS](#), with which you can use to generate a Shapefile format fiber map for uploading to the web portal and submit in response to Question II.A.5.

**7. What do I need to report in the database container if I have submitted only losing or unsuccessful bids for Requests for Proposals (RFPs)? (Question II.A.11)**

In Question II.A.11, if you have only submitted losing or unsuccessful bids for RFPs, in order to complete II.A.11 for the data container to avoid an error message, type "Not Applicable" in each field following "RFP\_Number," and provide an explanation in the Explanatory Attachment.

**8. For the circuit ID, who is the entity that purchased the elements in common for a particular circuit? (Question II.A.12(d))**

The circuit ID common to all elements purchased in common for a particular circuit refers to what was purchased by the *Competitive Provider's* customer.

**9. How do we report bundled billing components? (Question II.A.14)**

To the extent you can separately identify as part of a bundled service the *Revenues* associated with the sale of a *Dedicated Service*, report those *Revenues*. Question II.A.14 does not require you to use the ILEC-centric diagram and descriptions to assign billing codes. As set forth in Question II.A.14(c), "[i]f none of the possible entries describes the circuit element, enter a short description." This allows you to create your own unique billing codes and provide your own description as to what a particular code relates to.

**10. Does a company that sells unlit dark fiber have to report the associated *Revenue*? (Questions II.A.15-17)**

No, only *Revenues* from the provision of *Dedicated Services*.

**11. In responding to Question II.A.17, may I use a sampling methodology to account for the percentage of my *Revenues* from the sale of *DS1*, *DS3*, and *PBDS* services in 2013 that were generated from an agreement or *Tariff* that contains a *Prior Purchase-Based Commitment*? (Question II.A.17)**

In responding to Question II.A.17, the FCC will accept percentages based on a sampling of existing and new agreements or Tariffs provided that the respondent demonstrates in the Explanatory Attachment that the sampling methodology meets the following criteria:

- The sample is randomly selected;
- The sample design (including the sample size) is developed so that estimates meet a reasonable precision objective (e.g., estimates will be +/-5% with 95% confidence);
- The sample design gives consideration to the use of stratification and/or probability-proportional-to-size techniques to establish appropriate representation of sampling units to achieve the precision objectives;
- The sample data used in the calculation of the estimates will be available to the FCC upon request along with documentation as to how sample was selected.

Taking advantage of this option does raise the possibility that the FCC may contact the respondent post-submission inquiring about the sufficiency of the sampling methodology.

### **ILEC Questions (Section II.B)**

**1. How do we report *Locations* that do not have U.S. Postal Service addresses or where we do not know the geocode (i.e., latitude and longitude) to the requisite degree of accuracy? (Questions II.B.4(b)-(c))**

If you have entered the geocode for the *Location* (i.e., latitude and longitude), then you do not need to provide the situs address for the *Location*. If you do not know the actual address for the *Location* or the geocode with the requisite degree of accuracy, then you may either enter the closest nearby address to the *Location* and/or estimate the geocode for the *Location*.

**3. How do I report “past due” billing balances on invoices? (Table II.B.4)**

To the extent “past due” balances can be separated from the bills, they can be excluded from Table II.B.4. If the amounts cannot be excluded from the bill, but can be identified, they should be identified as such using a “Billing\_Code” field that links to Table II.B.6.

**4. How do I report “monthly prorated” billing information? (Table II.B.4)**

To the extent that the billed amount can be separated and identified (using Billing Codes that link to Table II.B.6) as “prior-month prorated” charges, you may do so using separate line items under the unique Circuit ID. If these charges cannot be separately broken out from the billed amount, they may all be included as a single amount under the “Billed” amount.

**5. How do I report billing information for customers in arrears? (Table II.B.4)**

To the extent that the billed amount can be separated and identified (using Billing Codes that link to Table II.B.6) as “arrears” charges, you may do so using separate line items under the unique Circuit ID. If these charges cannot be separately broken out from the billed amount, they may all be included as a single amount under the “Billed” amount.

**6. How do I report in-cycle adjustments as line items on customer's bill? (Table II.B.4)**

Companies are only required to report in-cycle adjustments as line items on the bill if they were originally billed as such. The adjustments should appear in Table II.B.4 as a separate observation with the corresponding Circuit ID for which the adjustment applies. The observation in the table containing the information on the adjustment should also include a Billing Code describing it as such and linking it to Table II.B.6. If the adjustments were not billed as separate line items, or if the adjustments apply to multiple Circuit IDs, the adjustments should be reported in Table II.B.5.

**7. In creating a separate observation for the same circuit identifier common to all circuit elements purchased in common for a particular circuit ("Circuit\_ID" field), what field do we place the in-cycle adjustment for a monthly recurring charge? (Table II.B.4)**

You may enter the in-cycle adjustments for monthly recurring charges in the "Initial\_NRC" and "Initial\_MRC" fields and the "Total\_Billed" fields for that same, newly-created observation, such that once all the "Total\_Billed" amounts are summed over all observations (i.e., circuit elements) with the same "Circuit\_ID," the summed amount should equal the total end charge for the circuit in that month, including all in-cycle adjustments. If you prefer, you can simply put the charges in the "Billed" and "Total\_Billed" fields and place zeros in the "Initial\_NRC" and "Initial\_MRC" for those observations.

**8. How do I know where the Commission has granted *Phase I* or *Phase II Pricing Flexibility*? (Questions II.B.7, II.B.12(k)-(n))**

A complete list of where the Commission has granted either *Phase I* and/or *Phase II Pricing Flexibility for Channel Terminations* can be found in Appendix D to the Commission's [Pricing Flexibility Suspension Order](#).

### **Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service provider Questions (Section II.C)**

**1. In the Instructions – Pages 53-54, the suggested record format template for responding to Question II.C.1 includes subparts "c-d Part 1" and "c-d Part 2" but there is no subpart "c-d" in the Data Collection Question II.C.1?**

In the Instructions, "Question II.C.1.c-d Part 1" on page 53 should read "Question II.C.a-b Part 1" and "Question II.C.1.c-d Part 2" on page 54 should read "Question II.C.a-b Part 2."

### **"Purchasers – mobile wireless service provider" Questions (Section II.E)**

**1. How do we report *Locations* that do not have U.S. Postal Service addresses or where we do not know the geocode (i.e., latitude and longitude) to the requisite degree of accuracy? (Questions II.E.2(b)-(c))**

If you have entered the geocode for the *Location* (i.e., latitude and longitude), then you do not need to provide the situs address for the *Location*. If you do not know the actual address for the *Location* or the geocode with the requisite degree of accuracy, then you may either enter the closest nearby address to the *Location* and/or estimate the geocode for the *Location*.

**2. Do the *Purchaser* questions capture *Dedicated Services* provided as *Unbundled Network Elements (UNEs)*? (Section II.E)**

Yes. *Dedicated Services* include *DS1s* and *DS3s*, whether or not they are sold as *UNEs*. To the extent you can separately identify as part of a bundled service the expenditures associated with the purchase of a *Dedicated Service*, report those expenditures.

**“Purchasers – Other” Questions (Section II.F)**

**1. Are expenditures on *Dedicated Service* reported to include just the monthly recurring charges (MRCs) or the MRCs and the non-recurring charges (NRCs) associated with the service, e.g., ETFs, construction charges, etc.? (Question II.F.2)**

Filers should report both the MRCs and NRCs associated with the *Dedicated Service* as expenditures on *Dedicated Service*.

**2. How do I know where the Commission has granted Phase I or Phase II Pricing Flexibility? (Questions II.F.13(m)-(n))**

A complete list of where the Commission has granted either *Phase I* and/or *Phase II Pricing Flexibility* for *Channel Terminations* can be found in Appendix D to the Commission's [Pricing Flexibility Suspension Order](#).

**3. Do the *Purchaser* questions capture *Dedicated Services* provided as *Unbundled Network Elements (UNEs)*? (Section II.F)**

Yes. *Dedicated Services* include *DS1s* and *DS3s*, whether or not they are sold as *UNEs*. To the extent you can separately identify as part of a bundled service the expenditures associated with the purchase of a *Dedicated Service*, report those expenditures.

**Form 477 Filer Certification (Section II.G)**

**1. Does the data collection affect my Form 477 filing?**

No.

**2. Do I need to amend my Form 477 filing because of the special access data collection?**

No.

**3. Can I certify at the holding company level or do I need to break it out by subsidiaries?**

You have the option of filing the certification at the holding company-level or individually by subsidiary. If you are certifying at the holding company-level and would like to clarify your relationship with various subsidiaries on whose behalf you are certifying, the parent/holding company or controlling entity may separately file a letter in the FCC's [Electronic Comment Filing System \(ECFS\)](#) in WC Docket No. 05-25 identifying its FCC Registration Number (FRN) and the FRN and name of all of its subsidiaries that are separately filing responses to the data collection.

**Special Access Web Portal**



## ***“Log In” Page***

### **1. How do I submit responses to the collection?**

Submit responses to the collection, including narrative responses and database containers, and streamlined certifications through the [Special Access Web Portal](#)

### **2. What is an FRN?**

FRN stands for FCC Registration Number. In order to conduct business with the FCC, you must first register through the [Commission Registration System \(CORES\)](#) as a business or individual. Upon registration, you will be assigned a 10-digit FRN, which will be used to uniquely identify you in transactions with the FCC.

### **3. What's the format for entering the FRN?**

Enter the FRN with no dashes or spaces, and be sure to enter any leading zeroes.

### **4. I don't know my FRN password.**

Click the [Forgot Your Password?](#) link on the Log In page. This will allow you to reset your password online if you know the answer to your previously-provided a Personal Security Question. If you do not have this information, contact FCC Technical Support at 1-877-480-3201 and select option #1 from the menu for password reset assistance (Mon-Fri 8:00am-6:00pm ET).

### **5. Does the parent company of a subsidiary or affiliate that is otherwise required to respond to the collection need to apply for an FRN if they do not have one?**

Yes, the parent company will need to register for an FRN in order to respond to the collection.

### **6. I have multiple FRNs. Which FRN should I log in with?**

Parties can either submit a single response reporting aggregate information at the ultimate parent/holding company level for all subsidiaries, affiliates, and intermediate holding companies or submit separate responses for individual subsidiaries, affiliates, and intermediate holding companies. For further information, see the data collection [Instructions – Pages 7-8](#).

### **7. How come I can't log in with my FRN password?**

The web portal log in does not allow certain special characters (such as @ or &) to be in the password even if you registered an FRN and password with special characters with the FCC's Commission Registration System (CORES). Please click the "Forgot your password?" link on the web portal log in screen to generate a new password associated with your FRN and make sure this password does not contain any special characters.

## ***“Getting Started” Page***

### **8. What is the Database Container Download?**

The database container is a file for submitting data that will include validation scripts to verify that the filer is providing the data in the appropriate format. It is currently unavailable pending further testing. Once available, we will announce on the [Special Access Data Collection Overview](#) page.

**9. When will the Database Container be available for Download?**

The database container parties will download from the web portal to load and deliver certain data in response to the collection, e.g., location and pricing data, is undergoing final testing and is not yet available. Accordingly, the Bureau has deactivated certain functionality on the web portal that respondents will use to electronically upload the database container pending completion of the database container. This feature will become available in the near future, in Version 2.0, once testing is successfully completed.

**10. Can I submit data without using the Database Container?**

Only for .zip files that are larger than 2 GB. Respondents can make arrangements with FCC staff to deliver files larger than 2 GB using a portable electronic storage medium.

**11. Can I submit my Essay Uploads without submitting my Database Container and Log File?**

You can upload responses to the narrative questions on the Essay Uploads page but you will be unable to successfully complete the submission process for the Full Website filing option until the Database Container is made available.

**12. Do I qualify for the Streamlined Certification Process?**

You only qualify for the Streamlined Certification Process if you were required to file the Form 477 "Local Telephone Competition and Broadband Reporting," on March 1, 2013, to report broadband connections to end users as of December 31, 2012 and are not a *Provider*, *Purchaser*, or entity providing *Best Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Services* to 15,000 or more customers or 1,500 or more business broadband customers in price cap areas. Additionally, the FCC has prepared a decisional tree diagram to help you determine whether you are required to respond to the collection which is available by clicking [here](#).

**13. Why can't I access the Full Website with my Internet Explorer browser?**

The Full Website requires Internet Explorer (IE) 8 or higher. Users who have IE7 or lower should use a different web browser or upgrade to IE8 or higher in order to access the Full Website.

***"Filer Identification" Page*****14. Who is a "Purchaser – Other"?**

Refers to Purchasers that are not mobile wireless service providers. For more information, see [Data Collection Questions 11.F.1-14](#) and [Instructions – Pages 64-71](#).

***"Essay Uploads" Page*****15. What collection Questions should appear in the Essay Uploads section for my filer type?**

Type of Filer Selected	Essay Questions that Should Appear
<i>Competitive Provider</i>	II.A.5, A.8, A.10, A.11 Part 2, A.18, and A.19 II.D.1-2 Explanatory Attachment
<i>ILEC</i>	II.D.1-2 Explanatory Attachment
Entity that provides <i>Best</i>	II.C.1

Type of Filer Selected	Essay Questions that Should Appear
<i>Efforts Business Broadband Internet Access Service</i> to 15,000 or more customers or 1,500 or more business broadband customers in price cap areas	Explanatory Attachment
<i>Purchaser</i> that is a mobile wireless service provider	II.E.9-13 Explanatory Attachment
<i>Purchaser</i> that is <b>not</b> a mobile wireless service provider	II.F.8-12 Explanatory Attachment
<i>Voluntary Filer</i>	II.C.1 and II.F questions Explanatory Attachment

**16. Is there a file size limit for Essay Uploads?**

Yes. The updated file size limit is now 200 MB (not 2 GB).

**17. How can I submit files that exceed 2 GB?**

Respondents can make arrangements with FCC staff to deliver files larger than 2 GB using a portable electronic storage medium.

**18. My essay responses do not contain Highly Confidential Information so what am I supposed to upload in the "Highly Confidential" field?**

Upload the same Confidential filing in the "Highly Confidential" field.

**19. What should I file in the "Confidential" section for the fiber route maps? (Question II.A.5)**

Consistent with the Protective Order, you may upload a document with the stamp "REDACTED – FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION." You must upload a document in the Confidential and Highly Confidential sections or you will receive an error message.

**20. What types of files will the essay upload accept?**

There are no formatting restrictions on uploads responding to the Essay Questions. The essay upload will accept Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Adobe PDFs, text, etc.

## ***"Database Upload" Page***

**21. What types of files will the database upload accept?**

The database container will only accept a .zip file format that does not exceed 2 Gigabytes (GB).

**22. Is there a file size limit for Database Uploads?**

Yes. A 2 GB limit applies to the zipped database container file that is loaded into the special access web portal.

**23. How can I submit files that exceed 2 GB?**

Respondents can make arrangements with FCC staff to deliver files larger than 2 GB using a portable electronic storage medium.

**24. What is a Log File?**

A file that provides a system check to ensure that your FCC Registration Number (FRN) matches the database container and that your database container is properly received by the FCC.

**25. Why can't I upload my Log File and Database Container?**

The database container parties will download from the web portal to load and deliver certain data in response to the collection, e.g., location and pricing data, is undergoing final testing and is not yet available. Accordingly, the Bureau has deactivated certain functionality on the web portal that respondents will use to electronically upload the database container pending completion of the database container. This feature will become available in the near future, in Version 2.0, once testing is successfully completed.

***"Certification" Page***

**26. May a single Certification Statement cover multiple entities?**

Yes.

***Submission***

**27. Can I print my complete submission package?**

No.

**28. Can I print the certification page as proof of filing?**

Yes.

**29. When will I be able to submit responses to the Full Website.**

You will not be able to submit your responses until the Database Container is uploaded to the Full Website under the "Getting Started" webpage. The database container parties will download from the web portal to load and deliver certain data in response to the collection, e.g., location and pricing data, is undergoing final testing and is not yet available. Accordingly, the Bureau has deactivated certain functionality on the web portal that respondents will use to electronically upload the database container pending completion of the database container. This feature will become available in the near future, in Version 2.0, once testing is successfully completed.

**30. How do I change the filer type once I submit my responses to the Full Website?**

You will need to contact FCC staff to reset the system to enable you to resubmit your submission in its entirety.